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I have come here today to support this bill because I believe that every student should have the right to opt out of a dissection. I participated in my first dissection my sophomore year in Biology class. Although I was given the option to do an alternative written assignment, I chose to go with the hands-on option that the majority of the class was doing. We dissected rats. I have never been the defensive, animal lover that many would expect me to be, as a life-long vegetarian. I thought I could handle it, no problem. After the rats were exposed, the class got rowdy. The rats were incredibly preserved, looking like they could have just died. I looked at the rat and saw a creature that was no longer alive, which made me sad, frustrated. What frustrated me most was that no one in the class seemed to care very much about the educational value of the dissection. To most kids, it was all a big joke. One girl repetitively poked her rat's balls, laughing hysterically. I saw other kids poking their rat where its eyes were, thinking it was funny. Some students were grossed out, but mainly because of the way the rats smelled and looked after being cut open. No one seemed to make the connection, or care, that all of these rats were killed for this experiment, which was not even being taken seriously. It still hurts me to think that my classmates could be so insensitive to the dead rats lying in front of them. I formed opinions of people I didn't want to form. I felt out of place and uncomfortable in that room at the time. I had seen a side of my peers I wish I had never seen, and immediately wished that I had chosen to opt out of the dissection.